

# The Polish Review

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## THEIR HERO!



POLISH ACE AND AMERICAN CHILDREN

*Courtesy of The Chicago Sun*

# SPEAKING OF POLAND . . .

"Poland's Agony" by Lord Vansittart



THREE years ago the Germans invaded Poland without provocation, on the old familiar pretext that weaker nations have no right to exist, because they stand in the way of the German claim to world-domination.

Germany has always been very bitter against the Poles, because for centuries she has wronged them very bitterly.

She has consistently aimed at their complete extermination. Consequently the invasion of September 1, 1939, was accompanied from the outset by every form of butchery, which has only been intensified during long ghastly years. It is all in line with the past.

The plain facts of history speak for themselves. I will start with a quotation:

*"No person was spared, whatever his condition, sex or age might be, but they put to death without mercy individuals of full age and those under age, including children and infants at the breast, so that the news of this cruelty should spread and break the nerve of others who would fear to offer resistance in other towns and fortified places, and thereby render secure their occupation of the said land. Seldom was the spilling of blood attendant on the conquest of any place more profuse, seldom the slaughter more inhuman."*

Were it not for the old-fashioned language you might think that was a description of some dark episode in this war, possibly that massacre in Polish Pomerania, in September 1939, when the German troops slaughtered thousands of Poles of both sexes, some of them mere boy scouts of twelve years of age.

No, it is a description of the 15th century occupation of the flourishing Polish town of Danzig by the German Knights of the Cross six hundred years ago.

The Pope himself denounced—among many other offenses—this massacre of more than ten thousand Poles in the city of Danzig, and the Teutonic Knights replied:

*"The citizens destroyed the houses of the town of their own free will and went to live in other parts."*

I have always said that there was nothing original about Dr. Goebbels. Innumerable episodes like this one have happened in the thousand-year-old struggle between the Germans and the Slavs. It has been one long story of slaughter and murder, falsehood and treachery.

The story of German mendacity and tyranny is old, yet it is always the same.

The first partition of Poland took place a hundred and seventy years ago, and since then the Germans have run absolutely true to form, except that their methods have become steadily more ruthless.

But the Polish people were tough and unshaken, as they are today. In spite of terrible pressure all the Prussian efforts yielded only miserable results. It was then that Bismarck used his famous expression defining the German policy towards the Poles in one word: AUSROTSEN (exterminate).

In Bismarck's time the extermination of a people could not take place except in time of war. So the German scientists started at once to work out in every detail the plan which was to be applied once they could make their opportunity.

The task was not easy. How was one to destroy a cultural, patriotic, numerous and liberty-loving nation like the Poles? The methodical German mind had worked out the answer long before the war began. The opportunity to put it into practice came as soon as the Germans had crushed Poland's military power.

As at the time of the occupation of Danzig six hundred years earlier, they decided that they must paralyze the nation by terror. Most inhuman massacres followed.

Apart from those killed in action, or even the slaughter of prisoners, they butchered civilians indiscriminately: shooting, hanging, bayoneting or mutilating men, women and children.

Next the Germans set themselves to deprive the Polish nation of its brain; the schools and universities have been closed, all libraries have been confiscated, books burnt, all publishing of newspapers prohibited and, above all, scientists, professors, teachers, writers and artists have been executed in masses or sent to concentration camps. This also was an intensification of an old process. The Germans had been making war on the Polish language for generations.

The churches have been closed. More than a thousand priests have lost their lives already, many thousands are at this moment in concentration camps. Both insidious and open demoralization of youth has been started.

While the rations allowed to the Poles are the smallest of all occupied countries — amounting in fact to deliberate starvation — cheap alcohol of the most dangerous kind is abundant, the German aim being to weaken the Poles both physically and morally.

From the Western Provinces of Poland more than two million Poles, after being robbed of all they possessed, have been expelled to Central Poland. One can imagine the enormous misery this had caused in already over-populated territory.

The Germans are trying to make the Poles forget that they are a cultured nation: all art treasures, pic-

(Please turn to page 8)

# THEY DID NOT DIE IN VAIN!

By BOGUSLAW KOZUSZNIK

AUGUST 26th, 1932, was a memorable and happy day for Poles all over the world. In Berlin a German band had to play the Polish national anthem "Jeszcze Polska nie Zginęła," to mark the victory of two Polish pilots, Zwirko and Wigura, in the German Air Challenge. In that flight round Europe, Polish aviators won their first victory over the most famous airmen in the world. It was a splendid prelude to the heroic exploits of Poland's Avenging Eagles in the defense of civilization against Hitler's onslaught.

Ten years ago, the silvery R.W.D. 6, piloted by Zwirko and Wigura carried to the world tidings of Poland, of her youthful aviators, of her promising air industry, then in its very inception.

The Air Challenge was an international test as well as an international competition. It indicated the progress of constructive achievement in aeronautics, it measured the courage of the airmen who braved the skies.

On their return Poland welcomed its heroes amid boundless enthusiasm and general rejoicing. Their glory was short-lived. The joyous shouts and jubilant cries still echoed over the fields of Poland, when came the tragic news of their death. Zwirko and Wigura, the living symbols of Poland's intrepid spirit, lost their lives within a fortnight of their victory at Cierlick, a Polish village in Cieszyn while flying from Warsaw to Prague, at the invitation of the Czechoslovak Aeroclub. A vicious gust of wind had torn the propeller and wings from the frail silvery plane. The solemn procession that had followed the caravan of the airmen to their last resting place was a true expression of love and sympathy that deepened the bonds of brotherhood between Poland and Czechoslovakia.

\* \* \*

Not many days ago news came of a bestial and blindly cruel act perpetrated by the Germans at the place of the Polish aviators' fatal crash. Emil Trepá, a 32-year-old Pole was publicly hanged after his escape from a German concentration camp, for spreading news from foreign broadcasts.

The local inhabitants and miners from Karwin and Sucha, were brought under police escort and forced to witness Trepá's execution. His own relatives were made to put up the gallows. Trepá was brought from the prison and tortured for two hours in the presence of his aged parents. His last words were: "Long live Poland." This beastly act brought back depre-

sing reminiscences of the fate that overcame Zwirko and Wigura.

When we return to our homes again, when the Germans will again hear the strains of "Jeszcze Polska nie Zginęła" and "Kde domov muj" — there, on the green pastures of Cierlick, next to the two symbolic graves, we shall erect a lasting monument to Zwirko and Wigura, and to all the Polish and Czechoslovak pilots who are paying with their lives that our countries may again be free and independent. Alongside of this monument to their heroism in Poland, in France, in Norway, in Libya, in Russia, in England, over London and on the seven seas, will stand another mon-

ument to Emil Trepá and the hundreds of thousands of Polish civilians, men, women and little children who have fallen victims to the bestial hate and murderous lust of the German invaders. These monuments will tell of the brotherhood of arms and common blood shed in the cause of justice and right.

They will stand guard over the future friendship of our two countries!

## TWENTIETH CENTURY SLAVE MARTS

*For some time the world has known that the Germans have re-established slave markets. Now they openly boast of the degrading depths to which they have sunk. The Muenchener Neueste Zeitung of August 5, 1942 contains a description of a slave market in operation. On a given day German farmers from the surrounding countryside come to town in quest of workers. An official of the agency to which they apply accompanies them to a square where foreign laborers, mainly from Eastern and Southern European countries are exposed to public view behind fences. The sexes are kept apart. Employers seeking cheap slave labor slowly walk up and down along the enclosure, carefully appraising the muscles and endurance of these unfortunate human beings and indicate their selection to the agent. Thus, one farmer decided to take three laborers, two Poles and one Russian. Since, however, the men did not seem sufficiently strong, the agent generously threw in a young Ukrainian girl. According to German decree, every German peasant is a member of the Herrenvolk and has the right to choose his farm help at any of the numerous slave markets of the Reich.*

# LODZ—A CITY DESPOILED BY GERMANS

AFTER their occupation of Lodz the Germans said that "if Lodz had not existed it would have been necessary to create it." Nothing emphasizes better the interest of the invaders in this greatest center of the Polish textile industry.

On its occupation by the German troops it was called "Lodsch", and on April 4th, 1940 it was renamed "Litzmannstadt" after General von Litzmann who had captured it in 1914.

In 1939, Lodz had a population of nearly 700,000 and if we take the 1931 census as our basis, the German population of Lodz never exceeded 50,000 people, as compared with 660,000 Poles of whom some 200,000 were of the Jewish faith. Yet after the illegal "incorporation" of Lodz in the Reich and its inclusion in the Warthegau, the Germans declared Lodz as a German city.

Before the last war, Lodz was a great industrial city with some half a million inhabitants producing goods valued at more than sixty million dollars.

On occupying it in 1915 during the Russo-German War, the Germans resolved to destroy this rival of the German textile industry. So the German "Economic Staff" on the pretext that metal was needed for war purposes dismantled the most valuable machines. Workers and technicians were deported to Germany, many of whom never returned. Deprived of raw materials, and ruined economically, Lodz ceased to exist as a textile center and its inhabitants were reduced to want and misery.

When Poland recovered her independence in 1918 Lodz had to be built up again as an industrial center. Only the walls of many mills were left and the machinery had been removed to Germany or destroyed by the Germans.

But the importance of Lodz to the new Poland was realized by the common effort of mill owners, workers and the Polish Government.

Germans in Lodz were given equality and liberty by the Polish Government. They had a German high school for boys and another for girls. Yet these very schools were used for Germanizing Polish children. A workman employed in a German factory knew that he would get advancement if he sent his children to a German school. The so-called "Lodzermensch" who talked only Polish at home was slowly Germanized, and in the German high school children were

taught to hate the Poles. The students became the core of German fifth column and proved useful to the Germans during the invasion.

The Germans of Lodz were highly organized even before the last war. When Hitler appeared on the horizon the Germans of Lodz began to travel frequently to Germany for conferences and congresses. Efforts were made to reGermanize Lodz. Political, as well as social organizations were used for that purpose. The Male Voice Choir was transformed into a Nazi Center and was packed with younger people. The Germans even openly demonstrated their sympathy with the Nazis by wearing white stockings in broad daylight. The Polish Government still followed its principles of toleration and prohibited any kind of preventive action.

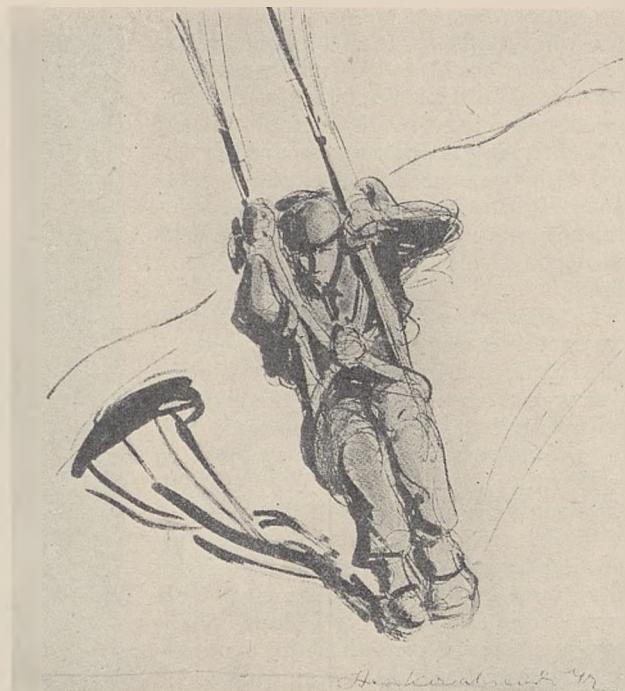
On the eve of war in 1939 a number of Lodz Germans fled to Germany where they were placed in a special camp near Breslau to be trained as parachutists and fifth columnists. Lodz was invaded by a number of commercial travellers and technical specialists, who have since been recognized as harbingers of an invasion. They looked more like officers than commercial men. Lodz is an instructive instance of how the German fifth column works.

When war operations started in 1939, Lodz was hardly bombed at all by the Germans, presumably because a large part of the industry was owned by several German families who had deserved well of the Nazis. But the Lodz textile industry was placed in a tragic

situation because large stocks of wool and cotton had been carried off to Germany and more than fifty per cent of textile manufactures was also removed to Germany. At the same time there was a complete cessation of overseas imports of raw material which had been the basis of Lodz production. Moreover, eighty per cent of raw materials produced in Poland, such as flax, hemp and local wool, came from the Eastern areas of Poland which were under Soviet occupation. As Lodz was cut off from these eastern areas and from the Government General, the Lodz industry was deprived of its local consumers, just as it had lost its foreign consumers on the outbreak of the war.

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# BY PARACHUTE---SHORTCUT TO POLAND



Drawing by S. Kowalczewski

One, two, three!  
They jump free,  
Free from the swiftly moving plane —  
Wafted down to the earth again —  
Polish paratroops, brave and gay  
Ready their German debts to pay!

EXPERTS claim that in half an hour a dozen parachutists could destroy the water supply of a city with a population of 50,000. Even "brass hats" can no longer doubt that this newcomer in the arsenal of man's tools to destroy man, must be reckoned with.

The idea of air-borne troops originated in the last war when General Mitchell of the A.E.F. proposed to drop 20,000 men over the German lines. This was dismissed as impractical by Marshal Foch's General Staff. After the last war the only countries to make intensive parachute training part of the regular routine of their armies, were Germany and Soviet Russia.

Poland's first steps in this direction were taken in 1936 when instructor's courses were organized in Legionowo near Warsaw. A year later, a first large-scale descent was carried out in this town. Parachute jumping was made a feature of all officer training schools and was compulsory for certain selected non-commissioned officers. The youth of Poland was also becoming increasingly interested in parachute jumping. The Military Center in Bydgoszcz conducted courses in parachuting for candidates from the other services, who were trained to jump with machine guns, explosives, radio equipment, etc.

However, the history of the parachute in Poland goes back more than a hundred years, for in 1808 Kazimierz Jordacki, a Polish aeronaut, made a successful emergency descent by parachute when his balloon caught fire at a considerable height . . . This was only eleven years after Garnerin's first public demonstration of parachuting in Paris.

When a call for parachutists was recently issued to Polish soldiers in Scotland, they volunteered one and all, for to them the parachute meant one thing—arrival in Poland at the very first moment of renewed fighting on Polish soil. They could not all be accepted for they could not all meet the very exacting physical requirements — perfect health, good lungs, strong heart, tough legs, elastic muscles. Those lucky enough to get in were subjected to intensive physical training and then taught boxing, hand-to-hand combat, skiing — in a word, commando tactics. For these new Polish chutists are trained to jump from the sky only as a means to an end. They are not airmen, they are infantrymen, engineers, artillery men, gunners, shock troops who have to get to places in a hurry.

The Polish parachutists have now been organized into a Parachute Brigade with its own training grounds and its own instructors. Their commanding officer had this to say about the moral requirements of a para-trooper:

"He must be exceptional as regards character. He must have great determination and will power. He must be fearless, ready for anything, able to carry out operations single-handed or in a group. He must enjoy taking risks and at the same time keep his head and size up the situation calmly. When in command he must be capable of getting absolute obedience and be a model, well-disciplined performer when the need arises. The rules of good fellowship must be law to him, even in the darkest moments. In following instructions he must be conscientious and exact, yet prepared at all times to act on his own. He must live a clean straight life, any departure from which might weaken his will power and lower his resistance."

Polish para-troopers have already won golden opinions from their British comrades. Entering upon their new assignment with the elan and enthusiasm so characteristic of the Polish nation, they have proved their worth in commando raids on the French coast. Many early contacts, when the Poles had British instructors, have blossomed into personal friendships. Today experiences and observations are exchanged between the two groups and suggestions are readily accepted by both.

The parachute has also served to bring about a further rapprochement between Poles and Czechs, Free French, and Norwegians, for each of these groups has received its parachute training in the Polish camp. Thus the Poles who fought for France and for Norway are, through a strange quirk of fate, helping to prepare their allies for the decisive assault against the common enemy.

# GOLDEN AGE OF POLISH CERAMICS



*Belweder Vase*

saw and the tiled stoves of Gebin, Pyszkow and Droczychyn are other interesting examples of early ceramic art.

The golden age of Polish ceramics, however, started in the 18th century, when in addition to faience and majolica, porcelain began to be made. At this time the ceramic industry was forging ahead in Silesia. Rich deposits of various types of clay and an unbroken tradition — there were ceramic guilds in Silesia as far back as the 14th and 15th centuries — prompted the growth of this branch of industry.

One of the most important Silesian factories was founded in 1752 at Glinica by Andrzej Garnier. Not only was it the most active in Silesia, but it also enjoyed favor for the high artistic level of its products. During its 125 years of existence it produced huge faience, steingut and porcelain vases, with plastically applied and colored bouquets of flowers, as well as terrines, pots, figurines, vessels in the shape of animals, ink wells, etc.

In 1774 that tragic and fascinating Polish figure, Stanislaus Augustus, founded the famous Belvedere porcelain factory in Warsaw to create domestic competition for the costly English china ware. From the Belvedere factory came the celebrated set of china that the Polish King presented to the Sultan of Turkey, Selim III in 1789. A lovely set in Chinese style bearing Arabian inscriptions, it still occupies a place of honor in the Old Serail Museum at Constantinople.

When the Belvedere factory closed down ten years

later, the King's project was taken up by Wolff, who continued to make china in Warsaw. Wolff products enjoyed widespread popularity in all Europe. Wolff table china in particular compared favorably with the best English articles as to strength, form and coloring. Also outstanding were vases, pyramids, baskets and decorative tiles made by the Wolff works.

The products of the Wolff and Belvedere factories were so similar in execution, shape and decoration that Wolff's china was often mistaken for the product of the King's factory. Both showed Chinese influences, then so very popular in the West.

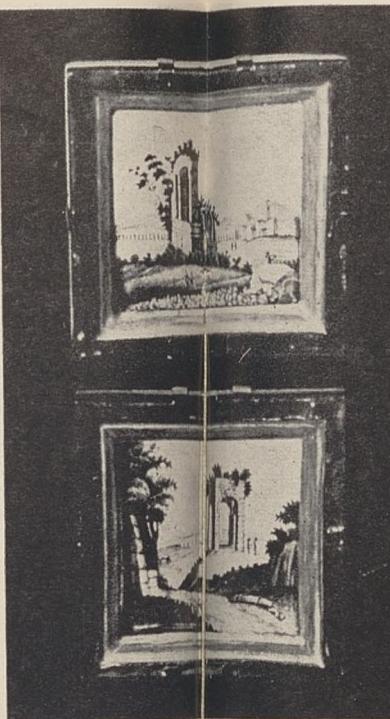
Through the initiative of members of the Polish nobility and a group of outstanding ceramists, abundant deposits of high grade kaolin and china clay were purchased in Southeastern Poland. These made possible the organization of a number of ceramic plants which reached a high degree of development.

Special mention must be made of the De Mezer brothers, whose contribution to the evolution of Polish ceramics was truly astounding. Men of high intelligence and great enterprise, who had studied extensively abroad, they were responsible for the successful establishing of three famous china and porcelain works.

In 1788 the De Mezer brothers took over the direction of Prince Joseph Czartoryski's pottery in Korzec. In a few years the factory reached such perfection that its products forced foreign manufacturers from the Polish market.

In 1795 Franciszek De Mezer left the Korzec factory to found a china factory in Tomaszow near Lublin for Count Zamoyski. Michal stayed on. Two years later fire destroyed the Korzec works, which had employed as many as one thousand workers. Despite the loss of huge stores of raw materials as well as of finished products, the factory was rebuilt in 1801 and soon entered upon another phase of remarkable activity.

Korzec porcelain ware was marked by the dazzling whiteness of its hard mass. Its early shapes and decora-



*Paintings on Baranowka China*

tions bore traces of Dresden, Viennese, Sevres, and to some extent Wedgwood influences. The shapes of its products followed prevailing styles such as Louis XVI and Empire. The gilded and painted adornments consisted chiefly of plant motifs, often stylized, diversified by landscapes, etc. Gradually, however, these were replaced by Polish forms, — reproductions of wooden vessels, boat-shaped saucieres, and high stemmed vases. Polish motifs were also used in the decoration. Thus we find grass, wheat, field flowers, conventionalized oak leaves. In the French period various vases and vessels were covered with tortoise shell, marble or plain colored backgrounds, on which were applied garlands of flowers.

The Tomaszow factory produced china and steingut in the English style, while its Empire style porcelain was gracefully shaped and beautifully painted.

Following the fire in the Korzec factory, Michal De Mezer moved to the Walewski estate in Baranowka, where he founded another china and porcelain works — one of the most productive and best known in Poland. Located near kaolin deposits, it was soon able to make ceramic ware equal to the renowned Korzec products. Its lovely china sets, embellished with

tiny corn-flower blossoms could be found in almost every well-to-do Polish home and its handsome chemists jars adorned with plant designs, could be seen in all the pharmacies of Volhynia, Podole and the Ukraine. Widely known in Poland were Baranowka plates decorated with clusters of beautifully painted tulips and clove-pinks. Some motifs, like the silver painted wreaths of rush leaves, attracted the attention and admiration of the International Ceramic Commission of the Association of Organic and Applied Chemistry at the exhibit of Polish pottery held in Warsaw in 1929.

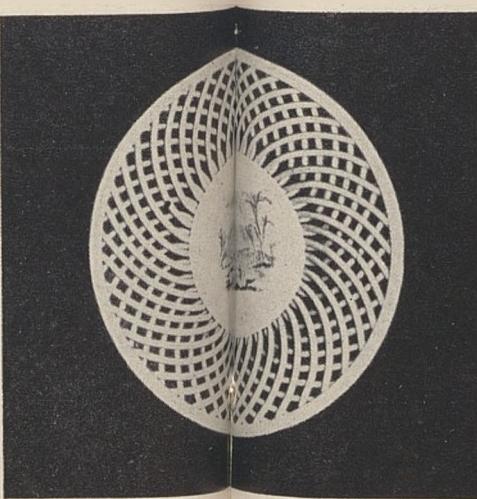
In addition to a number of smaller

factories in Eastern Poland, there were many other ceramic works in Central Poland, where china clay was also available. The largest of these was in Cmielow, founded in 1790 by the potter Wojtos, and expanded in 1804 by Chancellor Jacek Machachowski. Cmielow popularized china platters, plates and compote dishes showing rustic and war scenes as well as reproductions of ancient buildings. Cmielow vases, flower pots and exquisite china baskets were other examples of fine ceramic art.

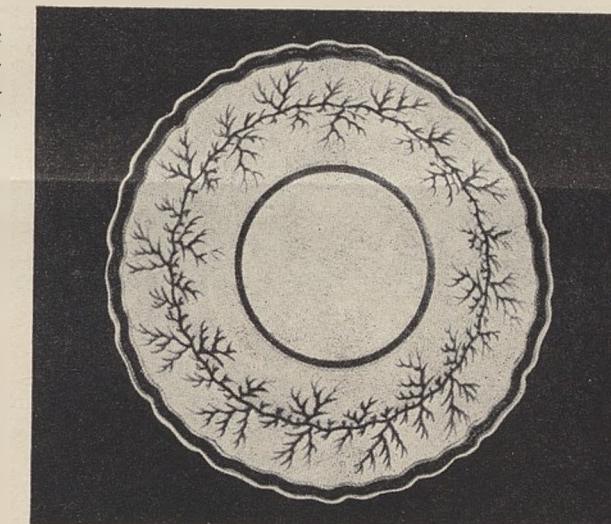
Products of the Slawsk factory, especially famed for its porcelain baskets and embossed plates, were considered outstanding enough to be included in the ceramic exhibits in the Sevres Museum.

One of the most interesting of later industrial enterprises was the majolica factory established in 1880 by Prince Michal Radziwill in Nieborow. This factory made artistic tiles, luxurious vases and large plates with portraits of Polish kings and statesmen, with views of their former residences. Radziwill was so interested in his factory that he spent a fortune on it and even painted some of the pieces himself.

Examples of 18th century Polish china were of course highly prized in Poland. Their fame, however, was not limited to the country of their origin. Polish china commanded the highest prices at auctions and



*Openwork Cmielow China*



*Korzec Dinner Plate*

highly prized in Poland. Their fame, however, was not limited to the country of their origin. Polish china commanded the highest prices at auctions and many an old piece is a rare collector's item gracing the shelves of many a French or American home.



*Openwork Slawsk Fruit Stand*



*Wolff Vase*

# LODZ — A CITY DESPOILED BY GERMANS

The "Ostdeutscher Beobachter" of October 11, 1942, involuntarily discredited German boasts about the favorable development of Lodz industry by revealing that in 1942 Lodz underwent a serious textile crisis and its wholesale trade fell off. The paper adds that the "temporary" crisis was caused by the limitation of exports to the General Government, delay in the organization of trade with occupied Russian territories, and transport difficulties.

(Continued from page 4)

In the first year of occupation the Germans decided that Lodz production was to be restricted to meeting the needs of the so-called "Wartheland" and "Danzig-Westpreussen", formed of Polish western provinces. Even in this restricted area Lodz industry had to compete with the Reich textile industry. For before 1918 the textile industry of Lower Silesia and Saxony had supplied these areas to some extent, and so the Germans considered that this industry must recover part of its lost ground.

All these factors had the effect of raising the idea in German minds to completely eliminate Lodz as a textile center by removing its installations or breaking them up for scrap metal, and by deporting its workers to other occupations in Germany. During the first stage activities were confined to Polish and Jewish establishments as the German owners opposed liquidation.

Thus Germany's economic policy in Lodz took two contrary lines inspired on the one hand by the desire to liquidate a textile center which was deprived of means of existence, and on the other by the necessity of existence of old German settlers and newly-arrived Germans.

It is three years now since German troops entered Lodz. Economically Lodz has been almost entirely captured by the Germans. The *Munchner Neueste Nachrichten* of December 7th, 1941 writes:

"Whereas before the beginning of the Polish campaign only fourteen per cent of all the industrial works were in German hands, today the owners or trustee managers are exclusively German. In trade the situation is entirely reversed: in 1939 there were only ten per cent German establishments, today there are only ten per cent non-German establishments. In handicraft the proportion of German has risen from ten to forty-nine per cent."

It is doubtful whether history can show another such example of spoliation carried out so swiftly.

The administrative department, both State and local, have also been completely taken over by Germans.

By December 1941, the number of German inhabitants had risen by 60,000. About 30,000 Germans

have been settled in Lodz and were installed in 9,000 dwellings, which together with all the furniture and furnishings and even clothing were stolen from Poles or Jews. This means that only 30,000, or hardly three per cent, of the non-German element registered as "Volksdeutsche". Yet encouragement was given to all, and failure to register might well involve losing one's home and one's work.

Despite the enforced changes in the ownership of Lodz textile works, after three years of German occupation, there are still 400,000 Poles living in the city. The mills are entirely dependent on Polish hands, foremen and engineers. These 400,000 inhabitants will faithfully preserve the fundamentally Polish features of Lodz until the day when it is again the second city in a free and independent Poland.

## SPEAKING OF POLAND...

(Continued from page 2)

tures and sculptures more than ninety years old have been confiscated from private persons. Music is prohibited; even gramophone records must be given up. Think of that.

The Germans are not only thorough but petty. All monuments, not only of national heroes, but of poets, scientists and composers, have been destroyed, together with many of Christ himself.

The birthrate in Poland is high, so the Germans try to decrease it by parting about one-and-a-half million men and women and sending them to forced labor in Germany. For the male population from eighteen to sixty a military conscription into so-called *Baudienst*, reconstruction work, has been imposed.

In Western Poland girls under twenty-five years of age and boys under twenty-eight are not allowed to marry. If they marry secretly, the children are immediately taken to Germany and placed in German nurseries.

The whole time the German pseudo-scientists, historians, geographers and so on are at work, or rather at the old game: inventing German names for Polish towns and villages, falsifying documents and archives, making changes even in the architecture of famous buildings.

Executions follow each other every day in order to crush out every vestige of a spirit of resistance and national consciousness.

The fate of Polish Jews is unspeakably tragic. They are murdered by thousands daily, even children — and poison gas is used to do the dreadful work.

Hundreds of thousands of Polish Jews have already perished. Hitler has no use for the Jews: he does not even consider them as potential slaves like the Poles.

Never in history were terror and oppression so well organized or on such a scale of cruelty.

# POLAND'S LINEN AND HEMP INDUSTRIES

POLAND was Europe's 2nd producer of flax and linen woven from it became an important item in Poland's textile industry. Flax had been cultivated on Polish soil since pre-historic times. It was grown by the small-farm peasants, hand picked and spread out in the fields to get the full benefit of dew and rain or was moistened in the rivers and lakes. It was then ready for drying. This was done near open fires, in special pits or in huge kilns built in the fields for this purpose. Southern Poland liked to dry flax in the sun. Flax was cleaned by hand in gins and separators. When all the seeds had been removed, it was beaten and then combed. Flax intended for high grade thread was combed with a wooden comb. This made for long, glossy fibers.

Spinning the flax into linen thread by hand created a superior product, for in this way each handful of the raw material received individual treatment.

The Polish peasant, a born craftsman, liked to spin his own flax and weave his own linen for his towels, bedding and clothing. But he also sold great quantities of raw flax and yarn to the huge mills of modern Poland, where it was transformed into a variety of linen fabrics.

Polish linen mills employed 10,000 workers, who operated 50,000 spindles and 3,000 looms. Equipped with the most up-to-date machinery, run by an experienced and skilled personnel under highly qualified executives and technical management, not only did these mills meet the needs of the home market, but they built up an impressive export trade. How quickly Polish trade was expanding in this field is shown by the fact that in 1936 Poland exported \$250,000 worth of flax yarns and linen tissues while in 1937 her exports of these products had risen in value to \$1,000,000.

The United States was a particularly important buyer of Polish loomstate linens. Manufactured in strict accordance with American specifications, these goods had gained an excellent reputation and were in regular demand. Among other exported linen goods were dry and wet spun yarns; thread of all kinds; shoemakers' thread for hand, machine and sole-sewing; cloth for various purposes; finished and unfinished canvas linings for tailors; packing, filter, mangle, deck-chair, dish-cloth linen fabrics in plain and fancy designs; sheetings; linens for hospital clothing; paillasse covers; bags; all sorts of waterproofed tissues; tents; wagon-covers, knapsacks,

gas-mask carriers, etc.

Much work was also done in standardizing the quality and length of the fibers by insisting upon uniform conditions of cultivation and preparation.

Polish linen was prized for its durability, smoothness, high resistance to moisture, and its resistance to sunlight.

The Polish Government was actively interested in the expansion of the Polish linen industry. It lent its support to the Wilno Linen Association, which endeavored to popularize this versatile textile. The Polish linen campaign was climaxed by two Linen Expositions, one held in Wilno in 1933, the other in Warsaw in 1934. These fairs demonstrated the possible use of linen and hempen articles in the army, navy, hospitals, aviation, industry, schools, commerce, etc. An immediate result was the tremendous vogue for Polish peasant-spuns in all parts of the country.

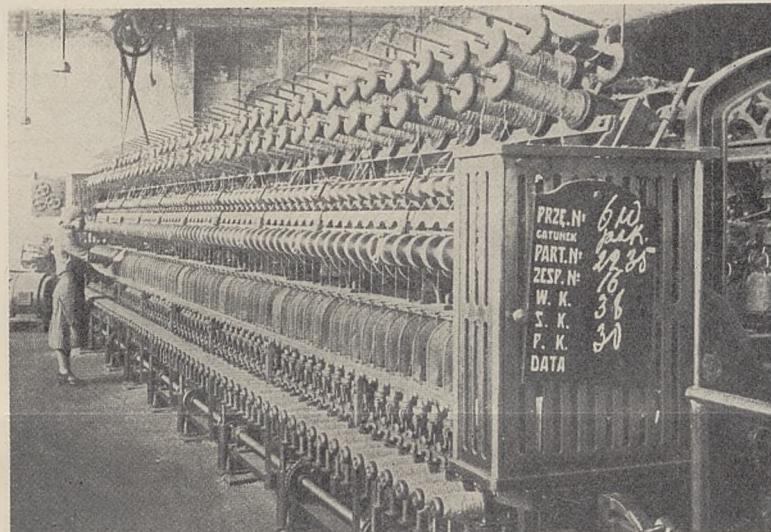
Hemp is another product of Polish agriculture. A less hardy plant than flax, it requires a more fertile soil and good care. Most Polish hemp came from southern Poland, where it was cultivated in much the

same way as flax, and used by the peasants for making heavy cloth as well as clothing.

The Polish hemp industry successfully met foreign competition on the home market and exported its products in increasing quantities. Polish twines and strings were exported to the United Kingdom, Argentina, Brazil, Denmark, Egypt, British India, Dutch East Indies, Spain, Colombia, Norway, Palestine, Portugal, Syria, the United States and the Union of South Africa.

Also exported were jute goods, such as colored and natural yarns for driving bands, carpets, book-binding; cloth for padding, hops, paillasses, mattresses, bags for grain, flour, sugar, salt, cement, artificial fertilizers, etc.

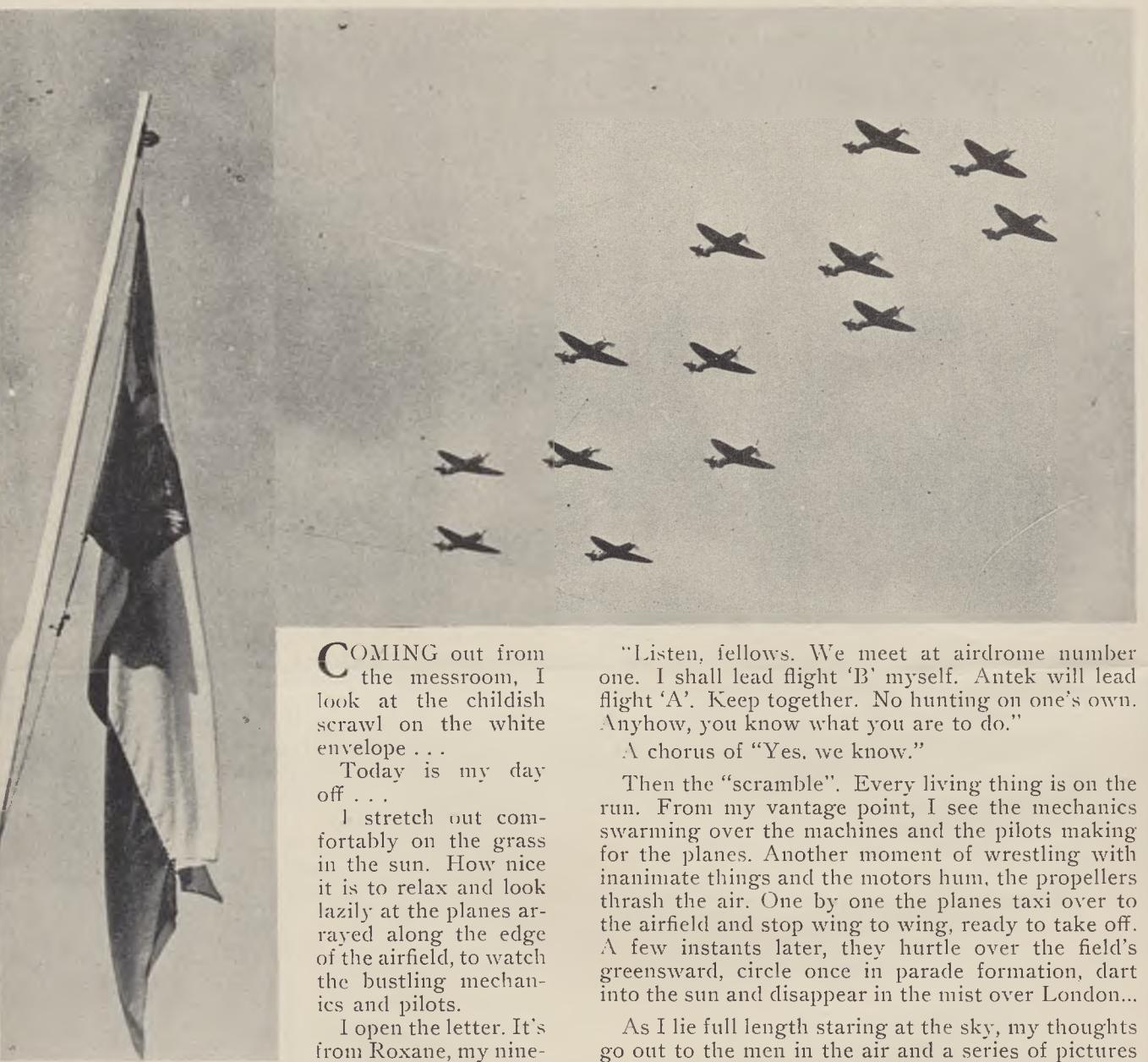
The brutal German invasion put a temporary end to Poland's linen and hemp industries, as it has snuffed out so many other aspects of Polish life. But when the Germans are driven out, Poland will revert to these industries. She will do so all the more readily as linen and hemp are basic Polish commodities, with a long tradition of self-sufficiency behind them. The Polish peasant and the Polish industrialist will once more pool their efforts to produce textiles on which the entire nation may look with pride, and the world with admiration.



LINEN LOOM IN OPERATION

# A DAY OFF ON THE AIRFIELD

By MACIEJ PIPIŃSKI



COMING out from the messroom, I look at the childish scrawl on the white envelope . . .

Today is my day off . . .

I stretch out comfortably on the grass in the sun. How nice it is to relax and look lazily at the planes arrayed along the edge of the airfield, to watch the bustling mechanics and pilots.

I open the letter. It's from Roxane, my nine-year-old cousin.

"Dear Uncle Maciej: We had invasion drill and there were tanks and planes and no pilot was as good as you, because no one else can fly so low . . ."

I folded the letter and laughed heartily. Dear Roxane . . .

Suddenly a voice coming through the megaphone breaks the heavy silence.

"Attention! Calling squadrons to the dispersal building!"

Things now begin to happen. Pilots come running from the messroom. Their yellow vests weave in and out among the machines and then disappear inside the dispersal building. I'm not there, but I could swear the flight officer is saying:

"Listen, fellows. We meet at airdrome number one. I shall lead flight 'B' myself. Antek will lead flight 'A'. Keep together. No hunting on one's own. Anyhow, you know what you are to do."

A chorus of "Yes, we know."

Then the "scramble". Every living thing is on the run. From my vantage point, I see the mechanics swarming over the machines and the pilots making for the planes. Another moment of wrestling with inanimate things and the motors hum, the propellers thrash the air. One by one the planes taxi over to the airfield and stop wing to wing, ready to take off. A few instants later, they hurtle over the field's greensward, circle once in parade formation, dart into the sun and disappear in the mist over London . . .

As I lie full length staring at the sky, my thoughts go out to the men in the air and a series of pictures that have been burned into my memory, float through my mind. Strange how we remember the most difficult moments, moments we cursed, that filled us with fear and caused all our being to revolt. They are the very moments we recall with pride, the very moments we long for . . . For they are symbols of our victory over the enemy and over ourselves. They are proof of our strength. Often our hearts sank when we were caught in a fiery embrace, when our Spitfire groaned under the terrific strain, when the pilot, perspiration streaming down his face, and mouth gasping for air, saw everything go black before his eyes. And then . . . we have those endless quarrels as to whose turn it is, because every one wants to fly . . .

Almost noon now. They must be over the Channel. In a few minutes they will be over France.

My hand fell upon Roxane's letter. My dear child. So in your opinion nobody could fly as well as I.

I get up quickly and head for the radio room. Maybe I shall be able to reconstruct something of the scrap from what comes in.

Again my thoughts go back to those flights over France. Roxane, do you know why your uncle is laughing? He's laughing because he remembers how he fooled death. On my way to the listening station, let me tell you how it happened.

"We were flying in a three-squadron formation low over the Channel, almost touching the water. It was a beautiful sight: six-and-thirty Spitfires hunting their prey! Already there was the coast of France. Now, with a point of guidance, we could appreciate the dizzy speed and irresistible force of our planes. We had this force in our hearts as well. And we gloried in it — in our youth and in the sun. And with every minute, another five miles separated us from England and we were that much closer to France.

"Finally we were over the Continent. I saw a German cannon ensconced in the ground, belching fire at us for all it was worth. Flat streaks of shellfire licked our planes. I was mad as hell. I opened fire at 500 yards. An unholy passion got hold of me. I could see nothing but the luminous ring of the gun below. A second later, I couldn't even see the gun — a concentrated volley of molten lead hid it from me. I clenched my teeth and dug my fingers into the levers of my guns. The seconds seemed centuries . . . In just another moment, the Huns would get a taste of my shells that would take the heart out of their war-making forever. Suddenly, instinct told me to push my machine forward. A crash, a jerk, too late. The machine seemed to have been struck with the ague. To jump? Too low. Land? The devils would kill me on the spot. I breathed a soft prayer.

"By some miracle my grand machine began to climb — slowly, unsteadily, to be sure, like a lunatic, but still it climbed. I could hardly keep hold of the chattering controls. But I hung on . . . Soon I gained altitude and was winging toward England. The thought crossed my mind that the water in the Channel must be rather wet."

My trend of thought was rudely broken when I bumped into Wrobel, who was also making



SMILES OF VICTORY

for the dispersal room. I explained to him I had been telling Roxane about the time I cut all three blades of my propeller down a foot.

"Oh, you mean the time they made such a fool fuss over some pilot who lost a splinter from his propeller in a French bush . . ."

And we burst into hearty laughter. Although we don't really feel like laughing . . . Maybe the boys are in the thick of a fight at this moment. Maybe they are in pursuit or being pursued.

Wrobel and I instal ourselves in the operations room. We put on earphones. For a long time we hear nothing. All of a sudden the radio comes alive. A distant voice, not too clear, travels in to us:

"Stick together, squadron. The Huns to our right are getting in the sun."

That's Antek.

"Attention, they're attacking us . . ."

(Please turn to page 12)



"SEE THE CONQUERING HERO COMES"

# A DAY OFF ON THE AIRFIELD



ACES HIGH, ACES ALL!

(Continued from page 11)

His voice is drowned in the bedlam that ensues. It seems like an age. We're more nervous than they are out there. Then Antek's phlegmatic voice again:

"Now my dear chaps, get the Huns into your range finders and each of you can shoot one down like a duck."

Once again it's judgment day over the air waves: crashing, creaking, warnings, commands. Everything is confused, jumbled, undecipherable. Angrily, Wrobel disconnects the radio.

We go outside. It's terribly hot and muggy.

"Kostek," I call out, "send for lemonade for the pilots."

Pew, it's hot. The waiting is endless. Someone comes from the operations room and tells us there were as many Messerschmitts as there are grains of sand on the beach and that our boys disposed of all of them.

Another half-hour and we hear the roar of the motors. They're back. Everybody is out on the field, all heads are anxiously turned up.

Here they come, in beautiful formation. One, two, three, four — we count quietly . . . What's that? Only eleven? Where's the other one? Despite the Spitfires' droning overhead, there is absolute silence . . . I wipe the sweat from my brow. They're about to land. They drop their landing gear. They come in by threes. Their wheels are touching the

ground . . . they're sitting on the field now. Then a happy shout: "There it is." The twelfth plane is coming back! Thumbs up! He must have had quite a bout with some Hun.

The pilots emerge from their planes, grinning. They fall into groups. Congress is in session. They talk, gesticulate — each one has his own story to tell to the mechanics, intelligence officers and all those who didn't go "upstairs" this afternoon.

The pilots' faces are lobster red, they're dripping with sweat, their clammy shirts cling to their bodies. Lemonade is consumed in startling quantities.

Antek is holding forth:

"I tell you I heard the angels sing. I was about to turn back when all my clocks began to pop on me. But I thought to myself, it's not the end of me yet, because just then a four-engine headed for me. Well, I headed straight back at him, and the next thing you knew, the Hun got scared and changed his course. So I followed him and let him have it. Even Adolf won't find a piece to pin the Iron Cross to. Yep, it was very successful," he concluded and threaded his way through the crowd.

We all ran to his machine. It was just as he said. The clocks in the pilot's cabin were riddled by German bullets. The fellow was certainly lucky to have come out of it without a scratch.

And so time passed in joking and talking. Before I knew it, my "day off" was over.